

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HELP CUBA BE FREE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, last week the Cuban tyranny sunk to an all new low as the communist thugs brutally attacked a procession of mothers, daughters, and wives of Cuban political prisoners collectively known as the Ladies in White, Las Damas de Blanco.

Their crime? Walking. Walking to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the dictatorship's March 2003 crackdown against human rights and pro-democracy activists, a grim event known as the Black Spring.

Many of those imprisoned at the time continue to languish in squalid jail cells and endure unspeakable suffering at the hands of their oppressors.

The processions of the Ladies in White was led by Reyna Luisa Tamayo, whose son, Orlando Zapata Tamayo, died only a few weeks ago at the hands of the Castro regime. Carrying flowers and wearing their white clothing as symbols of peace, they were suddenly and viciously confronted, beaten, and some temporarily detained by agents of the dictatorial regime.

Reyna described the confrontation, explaining, and I quote, "They dragged me. I am all bruised. They beat me. They cannot be forgiven."

Further reports indicate that nearly one-third of the Ladies in White marching that day had to seek hospital treatment for the attack. The cowardice of the regime's agents could not be more obvious in the wake of this attack.

Confronting the nonviolent actions of these women in such a vicious and hateful manner makes it clear: the dictatorship fears these women because the regime officials fear the truth.

The repression by the regime knows no boundaries. Now they are even attempting to deny the people of Cuba the right to mourn the loss of their loved ones.

For anyone who had doubt, these attacks make it clear: the regime has no conscience. There is no limit to its abuse and its indecency.

I was pleased, however, to see the European and the Chilean parliaments deliver strong statements of condemnation and reproach following the regime's actions last week. However, responsible nations must do more.

The newly inaugurated president of Chile understands this moral obligation. He recognized the suffering of the Cuban people, that it must come to an end, and that free nations must lead the charge. President Sebastian Pinera said, and I quote, "The government of Chile will do everything it can so that

in Cuba there is a process of peaceful recovery of democracy and a full restoration of respect for human rights and individual freedoms."

But where is the rest of the world? Why are regional leaders silent on the regime's gross human rights violations in Cuba and the abuses of power? Where is the Organization of American States? On the wrong side of history.

It was almost 1 year ago when the OAS voted to reincorporate the Cuban tyranny into the Inter-American system. What a mistake. The United States made a mistake then by shepherding such an effort.

But it is not too late to do the right thing by the Cuban people and take up the cause of freedom for the island nation. The U.S. Ambassador to the OAS should immediately call for consideration of a resolution condemning the tyranny in Cuba for its attack on the Ladies in White and demanding that all political prisoners be immediately released.

The U.S. should call on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to immediately convene a meeting to hear testimony on the systematic violations of human rights and the universal freedoms by the Castro dictatorship.

The U.S. must request an investigation by the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression in our Western Hemisphere on the assaults of independent journalists.

It is time for the world to admit the full brutality of the butchers in Havana and to provide the people of Cuba the solidarity and the support that they deserve. It is time for the people of Cuba to have the rights and liberties they deserve and for which they fight every day.

Let this Congress pave the way, Madam Speaker. I ask my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 252, a resolution I introduced to recognize the life of Orlando Zapata Tamayo, and calling for a renewed focus on the promotion of human rights and democracy in my native homeland of Cuba.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1586. An act to impose an additional tax on bonuses received from certain TARP recipients.

IN RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF COLORADO GEAR UP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition and support of Colorado GEAR UP because college access and success is more critical than ever for making our economy strong and competitive and to give every child the access to the gateway of opportunity that an education provides.

Each and every day, Colorado GEAR UP helps us meet the President's goal to lead the world in college graduates by 2020. It prepares our State's low-income students for college. It's funded by the U.S. Department of Education and managed by the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Unfortunately, way too many students are left behind across the country, both in secondary and postsecondary education. Designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter into and succeed in postsecondary education, GEAR UP provides 6-year grants to States and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools, and funds are used to provide college scholarships.

Colorado GEAR UP's vision is to engage, encourage, and enable Colorado's low-income students, including first-generation college-goers and new immigrants to get on a pathway to college so they can reach their potential and pursue their dreams. With its current grant, Colorado GEAR UP has served over 2,500 students in 8 middle schools and 12 high schools across Colorado.

Colorado GEAR UP is an effective tool for helping students to close Colorado's Achievement Gap by preparing students to meet rigorous expectations and to level the playing field for Colorado's low-income students. Beginning in the seventh grade, Colorado GEAR UP selects cohorts of students in 10 middle schools and 8 school districts Statewide. Pre-collegiate advisors follow their students through high school, where they empower students and families with the information, resources, academic, and cultural support that they need to finish high school and enroll in college.

A vital element of the program is the connection between students and their advisors. Advisors have a lower student-counselor ratio, and meet with their students at least twice a month. If a student is struggling academically, culturally, or socially, the counselors meet with the student even more often than twice a month. Data drives the programmatic decisions. They enter all data about meetings in a data base and they provide monthly reports to the principals of the school. Colorado GEAR UP also measures success through an annual online student survey that takes place each spring.